



## Using the Wiki and ScotlandsPeople for Scottish Research

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### SCOTLAND RESEARCH WIKI

To get to the Scotland section of the Research Wiki, simply type **Scotland** in the search box and click **GO**. The page "Scotland Genealogy" will appear.

On the right side of the screen, you will see "Beginning Research" under the Scottish flag. Three links here, "Guided Research," "Research Strategies," and "Record Finder," can help you decide which records will give you the types of information you need.

Under "Record Types," you will find links to articles on records of value for family history.

Under "Scotland Background," you will find links to articles that may assist you as you use the records—articles on history, handwriting, and names.

The links under "Local Research Resources" will direct you to locations like archives and societies in Scotland that may also aid you in your search for your Scottish ancestors.

In the middle section of the Scotland Genealogy page you will find two buttons, one for "Scotland Online Records" and another for "Ask the Community." The Online Records button takes you to a list of records online regarding all or most of Scotland. "Ask the Community" is a great way to get help when you are not at the Family History Library. Join the "Scotland Genealogy Research" community and post your questions to the group. All members of that community can see your question and answer if they have anything that may help.

Under those buttons are links and other advice for getting started in Scottish research.

If you have knowledge that you would like to share on the Research Wiki, click the **Submit Wiki Content** link on the left, and fill out the form. Your information will be reviewed and if deemed relevant and appropriate, will be added to the Wiki. Examples of the type of information we're looking for include:

- Link to a genealogical society or library for a county
- New online database containing genealogical information
- List of resources found in an archive or library
- Updating inaccurate historical or geographical information

For all submissions, please check the corresponding Wiki page to see if the information is already listed.

## SCOTLANDSPEOPLE

ScotlandsPeople.gov.uk is “the official Scottish Government site for searching government records and archives.”<sup>1</sup> Records available on ScotlandsPeople are these.

- Statutory registers of births, marriages, and deaths (civil registration), 1855-present
- Census returns, 1841-1911 (1921 will be released in 2021)
- Church records (Church of Scotland, other Presbyterian churches, and Catholic), from 1553
- Valuation rolls (tax), taken every year, but ScotlandsPeople has every 10 years 1855-1915, and then every 5 years 1920-1940
- Legal records (including wills and testaments), 1513-1925
- Highland and Island Emigration Society records, 1852-1857
- Coats of arms, 1672-1916
- Maps and plans, 16<sup>th</sup> century-present
- Image library, mediaeval documents to photos from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century

The indexes are free to search after you register for an account (also free), but you must pay for credits to view and download images of original records. Credits cost £0.25 each and are available in batches of 30 (£7.50), 40 (£10), 80 (£20), or 160 (£40). The cost of images varies according to the record type.

- Statutory register, census, and church register images cost 6 credits
- Valuation rolls are 2 credits
- Wills and testaments are 10 credits (no matter the length)
- Coats of arms are 40 credits

Unused credits expire after two years unless more credits are purchased within the two years after the first credits were bought.

For the Image Library, high resolutions images (TIFF format) are £15, plus VAT.

### SEARCH TIPS

The surname field defaults to “Exact name only,” while the forename field defaults to “Names that begin with.” These can be changed to

- Fuzzy matching (Levenshtein distance formula)
- Wild cards allowed (? or \_ for letter, \* or % for zero or more letters)
- Name variants (variants supplied by the National Records of Scotland and ScotlandsPeople Centre staff)
- Phonetic matching (Beider-Morse phonetic matching system)

These different search options can be especially helpful when dealing with Mac/Mc/M names.

Read the “Surnames” and “Forenames” guides at ScotlandsPeople if you are having trouble finding an ancestor.

When searching church records, you can’t use one parish for all the denominations because the parish boundaries and names were not necessarily the same. See the ScotlandsPeople guide on “Church Registers” for more information.

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<sup>1</sup> “About us.” *ScotlandsPeople*. <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/about-us>. Accessed September 2019.

If you can't find an ancestor in the index, it may be because

- The first or last name was "misspelled"
- The indexer misread either the first or the last name
- Your ancestor's given name (Mary) may have been recorded as initials (M.E.), as a nickname (Polly), or as a middle name (Elizabeth)
- The father's first name may have been mistaken as the family's surname in the census
- Your ancestor's age is inconsistent or incorrect in the census
- The original image was faded or difficult to read
- Your ancestor moved
- The event wasn't registered until later, not at all, or in a different denomination in the case of church records
- The records have been lost
- Widows or married women may use their maiden name

## **HELP AND GUIDANCE**

ScotlandsPeople's "Help and guidance" section has several helpful guides and tips. If you need to know about a particular record set, are having trouble with your searches or technical issues, go to "Help and guidance."